

14. The method of claim 11 wherein said fructose oligosaccharide is inulin.

15. The method of claim 11 wherein said bacteria are lactic acid producing bacteria.

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16. (Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps:

*D2* a) mixing at least one strain of live lactic acid-producing bacteria with at least one fructose oligosaccharide to form a mixture; and

b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 while maintaining at least about 60% viability of said lactic acid-producing bacteria.

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17. The method of claim 16 wherein said fructose oligosaccharide is inulin.

18. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding at least one pharmaceutically acceptable additive to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.

19. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding microcrystalline cellulose to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.

20. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding starch to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.

21. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding calcium diphosphate to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.

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22. (Twice Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps:

*D3* a) mixing live bacteria *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris* with inulin to produce a mixture; and

b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 while maintaining at least about 60% viability of said bacteria.

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23. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding at least one pharmaceutically acceptable additive to said live bacteria and said inulin.

24. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding calcium diphosphate to said live bacteria and said inulin.

25. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding microcrystalline cellulose to said live bacteria and said inulin.

26. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding starch to said live bacteria and said inulin.

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27. (Twice Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps;

a) mixing at least one live bacteria selected from the group consisting of *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris* with inulin, and at least one additive selected from the group consisting of microcrystalline cellulose, calcium diphosphate and starch; and

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b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 and maintain at least about 60% viability of said *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris*.

28. (Twice Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps;

a) mixing at least one live bacteria selected from the group consisting of *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris* wherein the total amount bacteria provided is between 0.5-50% by weight with 40-99.5% by weight of inulin, 0-20% by weight microcrystalline cellulose, 0-20% by weight of calcium diphosphate and 0-15% by weight of starch; and

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b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 and maintain at least about 60% viability of said *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris*.

Insert new claims 29-32, as follows:

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29. The method of claim 11, wherein the friability of the tablet is between 0.3 and 0.5.
30. The method of claim 16, wherein the friability of the tablet is between 0.3 and 0.5.
31. The method of claim 22, wherein the friability of the tablet is between 0.3 and 0.5.
32. The method of claim 27, wherein the friability of the tablet is between 0.3 and 0.5.
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MARKED-UP COPY OF AMENDED CLAIMS:

11. (Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps:
  - a) mixing at least one strain of said live bacteria with at least one fructose oligosaccharide to form a mixture,
  - b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 while maintaining at least about 60% viability of said bacteria.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein said fructose oligosaccharide is present in an amount of about 40-99.5% by weight of said tablet.
14. The method of claim 11 wherein said fructose oligosaccharide is inulin.
15. The method of claim 11 wherein said bacteria are lactic acid producing bacteria.
16. (Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps:
  - a) mixing at least one strain of live lactic acid-producing bacteria with at least one fructose oligosaccharide to form a mixture; and
  - b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 while maintaining at least about 60% viability of said lactic acid-producing bacteria.
17. The method of claim 16 wherein said fructose oligosaccharide is inulin.
18. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding at least one pharmaceutically acceptable additive to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.
19. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding microcrystalline cellulose to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.
20. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding starch to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.
21. The method of claim 16 further comprising adding calcium diphosphate to said bacteria and said fructose oligosaccharide prior to said pressing step.

22. (Twice Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps:

a) mixing live bacteria *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris* with inulin to produce a mixture; and

b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 while maintaining at least about 60% viability of said bacteria.

23. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding at least one pharmaceutically acceptable additive to said live bacteria and said inulin.

24. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding calcium diphosphate to said live bacteria and said inulin.

25. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding microcrystalline cellulose to said live bacteria and said inulin.

26. The method of claim 22 further comprising adding starch to said live bacteria and said inulin.

27. (Twice Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps;

a) mixing at least one live bacteria selected from the group consisting of *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris* with inulin, and at least one additive selected from the group consisting of microcrystalline cellulose, calcium diphosphate and starch; and

b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 and maintain at least about 60% viability of said *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris*.

28. (Twice Amended) A method of producing a tablet including live bacteria comprising the steps;

a) mixing at least one live bacteria selected from the group consisting of *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris* wherein the total amount bacteria provided is between 0.5-50% by weight with 40-99.5% by weight of inulin, 0-20% by weight microcrystalline cellulose, 0-20% by weight of calcium diphosphate and 0-15% by weight of starch; and

b) pressing said mixture into a tablet employing a force sufficient to form said tablet having a friability of between 0.1 and 1.0 and maintain at least about 60% viability of said *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Bifidobacterium animalis* and *Lactobacillus plantaris*.